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Security Council

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Letter dated 15 November 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Please find attached the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Ghana in August 2006 (see annex). This assessment was prepared under my responsibility following consultations with the other members of the Council.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nana **Effah-Apenteng**
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 15 November 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Ghana (August 2006)

1. Although Ghana's tenure as president of the Security Council, in August 2006, was dominated by the crisis in Lebanon and Darfur in the Sudan, several other important issues on the Council's agenda were addressed leading to significant decisions. These included the situations in Timor-Leste, Haiti, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and the Middle East including the Palestinian question. The highlight of the Council's efforts was an open debate on peace consolidation in West Africa, chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, the Honourable Nana Akufo-Addo; the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006) on the cessation of hostilities between Israel and Lebanon and the adoption of resolution 1706 (2006) requesting the Government of the Sudan to consent to the expansion of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) into the Darfur region.

2. The Council held 8 official meetings and 18 informal consultations. It adopted eight resolutions and three presidential statements. The President also made three statements to the press on behalf of the Security Council.

Africa

Burundi

3. On 25 August the Security Council held informal consultations on Burundi at which the acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Nureldin Satti, briefed the members on the situation in that country and the setting up of a United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), from the beginning of 2007, as recommended by the Secretary-General in an addendum to his seventh report on the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB). Members of the Council noted that the proposed establishment of BINUB was based on the United Nations common action plan, as agreed with the Government of Burundi in July 2006, and reiterated their support for the efforts of the Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi and the South African Facilitation to broker a peace agreement between the Government of Burundi and the Palipehutu-Forces nationales de libération (FNL).

4. Subsequent to the meeting, a statement was made to the press by the Security Council President in which he, inter alia, conveyed the concerns of the members of the Council about the reports of a possible coup attempt in Burundi and the subsequent arrest of political leaders. The Council members encouraged the Government of Burundi to follow the due process of the law during its investigations of the alleged coup attempt. They further called on the Government and all parties in Burundi to preserve peace and national reconciliation and to promote social concord in that country.

Côte d'Ivoire

5. On 7 August the Council held a meeting to consider the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, at which the President of the Security Council made a statement (S/PRST/2006/37) on behalf of its members. The Council affirmed its commitment to the implementation of the Ivorian peace process and the road map established by the International Working Group. It also reiterated its full support for the Prime Minister, Charles Konan Banny, and welcomed his initiatives and the ongoing dialogue among President Laurent Gbagbo, the Prime Minister and all other Ivorian parties. Further, the Council welcomed the launch of the mobile courts throughout Côte d'Ivoire, the completion of the pre-cantonment of the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the armed forces of the Forces nouvelles, and the establishment of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration Monitoring Group.

6. In addition, the Council took note of the signing of a presidential decree allowing the Independent Electoral Commission to propose technical adjustments to the electoral code for the transitional elections. It, however, expressed concern about obstructions to the deployment of the Commission's structures throughout the country and the establishment of the local offices of the National Commission for the Supervision of the Identification Process. It urged the Ivorian parties to solve these problems without delay and underlined the importance of guaranteeing the independence and neutrality of the media in Côte d'Ivoire.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

7. On 3 August the Council held consultations at which it was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, on the elections held in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 30 July 2006. Subsequently, a formal meeting was held, at which the President made a statement on behalf of the Council (S/PRST/2006/36). The statement commended the citizens of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the high voter turnout during the free and historic elections held on 30 July 2006 and appealed to them to accept the results in the same spirit of civic responsibility and to display the same commitment in the subsequent polls, with a view to ensuring the success of the democratic process. It also expressed its gratitude to the Independent Electoral Commission for its support to the International Committee of Eminent Persons chaired by President Joachim Chissano, the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and all the international partners of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, whose role contributed greatly to the realization, serenity and fairness of the electoral process.

8. The Council noted in the statement that the electoral campaign and the voting process were carried out in a largely calm environment, and deplored the incidents which occurred, in particular in Kinshasa, Mbuji Mayi and Mweka. It endorsed the opinion of the International Committee in Support of the Transition. The Council stressed that the elections would mark the completion of a long period of rule by transitional institutions and the start of democratic rule, while stating that those destined to lead the country would bear the important responsibility of providing long-term foundations for the restoration of peace and stability, national reconciliation and the establishment of the rule of law in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

9. On 4 August the Council members held consultations during which they were briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Council members reiterated their support for the election process, stressed the need for political tolerance and inclusiveness by all parties and looked forward to receiving information on the outcome of the first round of voting in the country.

10. In previously unscheduled consultations held on 22 August, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, briefed the Council on the official announcement on 20 August of the provisional results of the first round of the presidential election in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the subsequent outbreak of violence. The members of the Council expressed their concern about the clashes between armed elements in Kinshasa. They, therefore, demanded that the Congolese political leadership exercise restraint, immediately implement the ceasefire agreed between their forces and henceforth refrain from any threats or use of force or intimidation against political opponents and their supporters. They also stressed that there could be no military solution to political issues in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and urged all parties to take immediate steps to support the democratic process that was under way. Further, members called on the Congolese leadership not to allow the progress made by the people of the country to be derailed. They expressed the hope that the proposed meeting between President Joseph Kabila and Vice-President Jean-Pierre Bemba would be held as soon as possible to defuse political tension.

11. Following the meeting, a statement was made to the press by the President, indicating, inter alia, that the members of the Security Council had taken note of the official announcement of the provisional results of the first round of the presidential election in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and reiterated their appreciation of the remarkable work of the Independent Electoral Commission, which had allowed the elections to be held in the best possible conditions. The Council commended the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for their commitment to the democratic process, as demonstrated by the high voter turnout, and appealed to the political leaders to respect the electoral calendar established by the Independent Electoral Commission. They also expressed appreciation for the effective operation of EUFOR in support of MONUC, renewed their support for the Committee in Support of the Transition and MONUC, and condemned any action threatening their security.

Panel of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo

12. The Secretary-General, in a letter dated 7 August 2006 to the President of the Security Council (S/2006/624), informed the Council that, in consultation with the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he had reappointed four members of the Group of Experts on that country — Ibra Déguène Ka (Senegal, Chairman), Enrico Carisch (Switzerland, finance expert), Abdoulaye Cissoko (Mali, aviation expert) and Jean Luc Gallet (France, customs and border control expert) — as requested by the Council in its resolution 1698 (2006). He noted that a fifth expert would be proposed soon. Subsequently, the Secretary-General, in a letter dated 28 August 2006 to the President of the Security Council (S/2006/693), informed the Council that, in consultation with the Committee established pursuant to resolution

1533 (2004), he had appointed an arms expert, David Huxford (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), for an initial period until 31 December 2006.

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

13. Pursuant to the request conveyed by identical letters dated 25 August 2006 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council, the Security Council met on 29 August and unanimously adopted resolution 1705 (2006) by which it decided, in accordance with article 12 ter of the Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, to extend the elected term of Judge Solomy Balungi Bossa as an ad litem judge of the Tribunal until 24 June 2007, and authorized her to continue to serve as a judge in the *Butare* case from 28 August 2006 until its completion.

Somalia

14. In informal consultations on 16 August, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, François Fall, provided an update on the talks in Khartoum between the Transitional Federal Government and the Islamic Courts Union which, after the initial meeting on 22 June 2006, had not been convened. The members of the Council urged the two parties to exercise maximum restraint in Somalia and participate in the Khartoum talks. The Council reaffirmed its support for the Transitional Federal Government while it requested the two parties and regional powers to abide by the United Nations arms embargo.

Sudan

15. Informal consultations were held on the situation in Darfur, following the circulation of the Secretary-General's report of 28 July 2006 (S/2006/591) and his letter dated 10 August, in both of which he stressed the deterioration in the situation in Darfur. The Council members deplored the escalation in violence since the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement on 5 May 2006, which had resulted in the displacement of 25,000 more persons. In addition, the mounting attacks on humanitarian workers resulting in a record number of deaths posed a grave threat to the lifeline of the displaced.

16. The Council also expressed concern about the delay in the implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement. Some members blamed this on the failure of some factions to sign the Agreement, while others attributed the slow pace mainly to the limitations of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS), whose mandate was expected to expire by the end of September 2006. The Secretary-General's proposals for strengthening AMIS were received positively, although the majority of Council members felt that that could not be a substitute for the deployment of a robust and sizeable United Nations mission.

17. The Council held informal consultations on the Sudan also on 24 August, during which it considered the plight of child soldiers recruited by the warring factions. A debate was held in private on 28 August on a plan drawn up by the Government of the Sudan to enforce the Darfur Peace Agreement. Representatives of the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the African Union participated in the meeting. It was noted that the plan proposed by the Government contained elements of the Darfur Peace Agreement, while there

were members who deemed that it essentially sought a military solution to the conflict.

18. On 31 August, the Council adopted resolution 1706 (2006), in which it called for the enhancement of AMIS and the expansion of UNMIS into Darfur, on the basis of the consent of the Government of the Sudan. China, Qatar and the Russian Federation abstained. Pursuant to the resolution, the United Nations is expected to deploy 17,300 military personnel and an appropriate civilian component, including up to 3,300 police personnel in Darfur when the mandate of AMIS expires on 31 December 2006, with the consent of the Government of the Sudan.

Asia

Iraq

19. Following consultations on 10 August, the Council adopted resolution 1700 (2006), by which it extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) for 12 months.

20. It is recalled that the Secretary-General had earlier requested the extension because Iraq continued to face formidable political, security and economic challenges and still needed the support of the international community.

21. The extension would allow the Mission to continue assisting Iraq in various areas including constitutional development, reform of its legal and judicial system and the promotion of human rights.

Timor-Leste

22. The Council held informal consultations on the situation in Timor-Leste on 10 August, followed by an open debate on 15 August. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Ian Martin, provided an update on the broad range of initiatives aimed not only at achieving justice and reconciliation for the people of Timor-Leste but also at the realization of the long-term development of the country. The Council adopted resolution 1704 (2006) on 25 August, by which it established the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) in order to achieve greater efficiency, better coordination and synergies in international assistance to the country.

The situation in the Middle East

Lebanon

23. In informal consultations held on Saturday, 5 August, the Permanent Representative of France, Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sablière, introduced a draft resolution, which was the outcome of the joint efforts of the United States and France, aimed at achieving a lasting settlement of the conflict between Lebanon and Israel. The draft resolution called for the full cessation of hostilities, and also contained the principles and elements of a permanent ceasefire and long-term solution to the Lebanese crisis.

24. The members of the Council, by and large, agreed that the draft resolution was timely and offered the basis for negotiations towards the cessation of hostilities.

25. The Council, at its meeting held on 8 August, heard an address by His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahyan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, who spoke on behalf of the Group of Arab States. He stated that the draft resolution required careful consideration and must take into account the Arab position on the situation in Lebanon, the socio-political structure of Lebanese society and the interests, unity, stability and territorial integrity of Lebanon. In the opinion of the Arab Group, a clear and decisive resolution of the conflict could be achieved through an immediate comprehensive ceasefire, withdrawal of Israeli forces to behind the Blue Line, strengthening of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and support for the stated decision of the Government of Lebanon to extend its authority throughout its territory by deploying the Lebanese army.

26. In his contribution, the Minister of Culture of Lebanon and Special Envoy of the Lebanese Council of Ministers, Tarek Mitri, called for the immediate withdrawal of Israel from Lebanese territory and reaffirmed the Government's readiness to deploy the army as Israel withdrew behind the Blue Line.

27. Ambassador Dan Gillerman of Israel, who participated in the meeting, noted that the test faced by the Council was not whether it could not adopt a resolution. The question was whether it could adopt a course of action, a blueprint for change, which would end the threat that Hizbollah posed to the peoples of Israel and Lebanon and the whole region.

Adoption of resolution 1701 (2006)

28. After intensive negotiations on the draft resolution, the Council on 11 August adopted resolution 1701 (2006), by which it called for a full cessation of hostilities and made proposals for the phased withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces from southern Lebanon, while UNIFIL assisted the Lebanese Army to take control of the area.

29. In the resolution the Council emphasized the need for an end to the violence and the need to address urgently the causes that had given rise to the crisis, including the unconditional release of the abducted Israeli soldiers. It also called for Israel and Lebanon to support a long-term solution based, inter alia, on full respect for the Blue Line by both parties and full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords. There were to be no foreign forces in Lebanon without the consent of its Government and no sales or supply of arms and related materiel to Lebanon except as authorized by its Government. Israel was to provide to the United Nations all remaining maps of landmines in Lebanon in its possession.

30. Further, the Council decided to increase the troop strength of UNIFIL to a maximum of 15,000, and that it would, in addition to its original mandate, monitor the cessation of hostilities, and extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons.

31. The Council stressed the importance of the Government of Lebanon extending its control over all Lebanese territory, and called upon the Government of Lebanon to secure its borders and other entry points to prevent the entry into the country, without its consent, of arms or related materiel.

32. In his statement after the adoption of the resolution, the Secretary-General expressed his profound disappointment that the Council had not taken this step

earlier and noted that this inability had badly shaken the world's faith in its authority and integrity.

Implementation of resolution 1701 (2006)

33. The Council considered the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) at informal consultations held on 21 August.

34. The members of the Council acknowledged that the cessation of hostilities was holding and encouraged the parties to the conflict to sustain it. However, they expressed serious concern about the raid by Israeli commandos centred on the village of Bodai in the Bekaa Valley on 19 August 2006 and noted that it was in contravention of paragraph 1 of resolution 1701 (2006), in which the Council called for the full cessation of hostilities. The members of the Council called on the parties to the conflict and States Members of the Organization to respect the arms embargo and welcomed the deployment of the Lebanese armed forces to southern Lebanon. They also expressed appreciation for the work of UNIFIL in post-conflict Lebanon and called for its immediate reinforcement to enable it to perform the tasks assigned to it in resolution 1701 (2006).

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

35. At an open meeting held on 22 August, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Ibrahim Gambari, on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Under-Secretary-General noted that it was time to step back from the tragic events of the past month and take a closer look at the Middle East peace process which had stagnated in the wake of unfulfilled promises, political indifference and tit-for-tat violence by Israel and Palestine.

36. He emphasized that the absence of a comprehensive solution was the root cause of the region's problems, and progress towards a two-State solution would facilitate the resolution of conflict elsewhere in the region. He referred to the recent call by the Secretary-General for a renewed international effort to bring stability and peace to the whole region.

37. The members of the Council who addressed the issue stressed that if resolution 1701 (2006) was fully implemented it would contribute positively to the Middle East peace process, particularly the question of Palestine. They also called on Israel and Palestine to engage in negotiations based on existing agreements and obligations. The Council was encouraged to seek a fair and comprehensive solution to the conflict.

Americas

Haiti

38. A private meeting with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was held on 8 August, following which informal consultations were held by the Council. The new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Edmond Mulet, briefed the Council on developments in Haiti. It was noted that, although some progress had been made towards recovery,

the security situation in the country remained precarious as manifested by incidents of gang warfare, kidnappings and killings. The members commended MINUSTAH for its assistance to the Government in consolidating stability and democracy. They also welcomed the 25-year governance and development plan proposed by President René Preval to address the underlying causes of Haiti's chronic instability, and called for increased assistance to the Government. On 15 August, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1702 (2006), by which it extended the mandate of MINUSTAH until 15 February 2007.

Other matters

Open debate on peace consolidation in West Africa

39. On 9 August, the Council held an open debate on peace consolidation in West Africa. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, the Secretary-General, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, the Secretary-General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guinea and others participated in the debate. Statements were made by all 15 Council members, and by 16 other States from the wider membership of the United Nations, including Finland, on behalf of the European Union.

40. In a statement read out by the President on behalf of Council members at the end of the deliberations, the Council stressed the continued need for West African States and ECOWAS to curb illicit cross-border activities and reiterated the importance of all West African leaders working together for peace and security in the region. The Council also emphasized the regional dynamics of peace and security in West Africa, and the unique interdependence of the countries in the region, and called for enhanced cooperation among the United Nations, ECOWAS and the African Union to help Governments in the region to consolidate peace and address pertinent cross-border issues, such as the flow of illegal small arms, youth unemployment, disarming ex-fighters and the exploitation of natural resources.

41. The Council further underlined the importance and the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in assisting countries emerging from conflict to achieve sustainable peace and stability. It requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the ECOWAS secretariat, to submit to it by the end of the year a report with recommendations on the cooperation among the United Nations missions deployed in the region and on the cross-border issues in West Africa.